



First Class Leader

NAPS Branch 66
Portland OR

www.napsnw.org

March 2009

From the President's Desk

By Dee Ann DeSimini
President, Branch 66

Hello fellow members. For those of you who were unable to attend the member appreciation dinner on Saturday, February 21st, I am pleased to report that we had a fantastic turnout and a good time was had by all.

We were honored with several guest speakers. Jay Killackey, NAPS National Secretary/Treasurer, emphasized staying informed via the national web site and using it as a portal to communicate with congressional members. Marilyn Walton, NAPS Pacific Area Vice President, shared some insights about our trying times. Kim Anderson, District Manager, and Lisa Shear, Plant Manager, discussed the importance of working as a team and, to demonstrate their point, they conducted a Postal Trivia contest with prizes. The contest was designed to illustrate that we are stronger as a team and together we can achieve so much more.

Perry Weinberger and Nancy McVicker were both recognized for their dedicated and lengthy service to NAPS

Branch 66. Between the two of them, they have donated their time and support to NAPS for over 30 years. We thank them greatly and look forward to their continued support. I personally recognized Kathi Clapp, State President, for successfully signing up every ASP graduate throughout the past three years. Way to go, Kathi!

Over \$700 was raised at the highly publicized auction to benefit the Supervisors Political Action Committee (SPAC). Reece Steelman, Auctioneer Extraordinaire, bantered, heckled, and guilt-tripped the membership into "buying" several fabulous items. The donated bottles of wine (a special thanks to those who generously donated) were divided into three lots and the fierce bidding resulted in over 50% of the total take. Plans are already in the works for the next auction.

I hope those of you who attended had a great time and had the opportunity to network with your fellow management peers. If you could not make it this year, please plan on being there next time (with checkbook in hand). Have a successful and healthy March. ☺

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Upcoming Events:

Tuesday, March 10, 2009
6:30 p.m.
Membership Meeting
Izzy's Pizza
Buffet dinner for just \$6.00!
1307 NE 102nd St, Portland
(Gateway Shopping Center)

March 29 thru 31, 2009
Legislative Training Seminar
Washington D.C.
Attendees: Dan O'Donnell
and Alex Navarro

Tuesday, April 14, 2009
6:30 p.m.
Membership Meeting
Izzy's Pizza
Buffet dinner for just \$6.00!
1307 NE 102nd St, Portland
(Gateway Shopping Center)



Jay Killackey and Marilyn Walton

The Annual NAPS Branch 66 Dinner was held on Saturday, February 21, 2008. Guest speakers included National Secretary/Treasurer Jay Killackey, Western Region Vice President Marilyn Walton, Portland District Manager Kim Anderson, and Portland Plant Manager Lisa Shear.



Legislative Bits and Pieces

Extracted From Postings on the NAPUS Website

On February 26, 2009, President Obama released the outline of his Fiscal Year 2010 Budget. On page 126 of the 134-page document is a reference to the Postal Service that reads, "Realign USPS employee/ employer benefit contributions." The proposal projects a 5-year cost savings to the Federal government of approximately \$4.2 billion, and a 10-year savings of about \$9.5 billion. A detailed explanation of the Blueprint is not currently available, and may not be on hand until early April. As it stands now, the proposal calls for USPS benefit contributions, on behalf of its employees,

to be less than called for in existing union contracts and managerial consultative agreements.

During the last week of February legislation was introduced in both Houses of Congress that would help level the playing field for federal and postal retirees.

First, Rep. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) introduced H.R. 1203, "the Federal and Military Retiree Health Care Equity Act." The legislation enjoys the co-sponsorship of 16 Members of Congress. H.R. 1203 would permit federal and postal retirees to pay their health insurance premiums on a pre-tax basis. As a result, Federal retirees would save approximately \$820 per year.

H.R. 1203 has been referred to three House Committees: Oversight and Government Reform, Ways and Means, and Armed Services. Sen. Jim Webb (D-VA) introduced S. 491, the Senate companion to H.R. 1203. The Senate bill currently has 10 cosponsors and has been referred only to the Senate Finance Committee.

The same week, Sen. Diane Feinstein (D-CA) introduced S. 484. The Feinstein bill has 10 cosponsors. It would repeal the Government Pension Offset and the Windfall Elimination Provision. It is the Senate companion to H.R. 235, which was introduced by Rep. Howard Berman (D-CA) earlier this year. The Berman Bill has 194 cosponsors. ☐

Attempts to Secure USPS Pre-Funding Relief Continues

2/11/09 Legislative Update
By Bruce Moyer, NAPS Legislative Counsel

Efforts to pass HR 22, to provide critical financial relief to the Postal Service through the recalculation of its future retiree health premium payments, continue in the House of Representatives.

NAPS members have been urging their House lawmakers to co-sponsor HR 22, which provides eight years of pre-funding relief to the Postal Service between now and 2016.

Parallel efforts in the Senate failed to gain inclusion of two years of USPS pre-funding relief in the \$828 billion stimulus package passed by the Senate yesterday. Postal employee organizations and the mailing industry had pushed for the inclusion of the pre-funding relief in the Senate measure.

HR 22, introduced by Rep.

John McHugh (R-NY) and Rep. Danny Davis (D-IL), would permit the Postal Service to begin paying its retiree health premiums out of the retiree health benefit trust fund -- to which the Postal Service has already deposited \$32 billion. Ultimately, the Postal Service will pay \$107.5 billion into the fund by 2016, under the postal reform law.

NAPS supports HR 22 because it would help pay for \$2.3 billion of the Postal Service's current retiree health care obligation this year -- rather than require use of current operating funds. This would not interfere with the health care that current and future retirees receive or their own premium payments. It would simply cut to the chase and accelerate a provision in the postal reform law that calls for USPS premium payments to start being drawn from the retiree health benefit fund after 2016,

from which the Postal Service will make annual payments of \$5 to \$6 billion.

A hearing by the House postal oversight subcommittee on HR 22 and the USPS financial picture is likely sometime in the coming weeks. Rep. Stephen Lynch (D-MA), who was elected last week by the House leadership to the chairmanship of the postal oversight committee, will preside at that hearing for the first time. Lynch, the five-term Congressman from the South Boston/Brockton area, has been active on postal issues. During the last Congress he introduced HR 4236, curtailing USPS use of contracting-out of mail delivery. The Massachusetts Congressman knows postal issues from the real-world perspective. His mother, Ann Lynch, was a postal clerk, and other relatives have postal roots. ☐



FERS Sick Leave Measure Dumps Use-It-Or-Lose It Approach

2/11/09 Legislative Update
By Bruce Moyer, NAPS Legislative Counsel

Legislation jettisoning the "use-it or lose-it" approach toward sick leave for FERS workers has once again been introduced in the House. This year's bill, though, is much better than last year's proposal.

The new measure, The FERS Sick Leave Equity Act, HR 958, introduced by Rep. James Moran (D-VA) and Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA), will apply the same sick leave policy to employees covered under FERS as to employees under the CSRS.

Under Moran's proposal, accrued sick leave at the end of a federal or postal career will be added to the years of service an employee has worked. Because these years of service are used to calculate retirement benefits, the financial payoff will be better. Retiring FERS employees who hold on to their sick leave will get more in retirement benefits each year.

NAPS has endorsed the Moran bill and will work hard for its passage. NAPS members at the upcoming LTS will hit the Hill in search of cosponsors. In a letter to Representative Moran, NAPS President Ted Keating thanked the Virginia lawmaker for his valuable efforts in introducing the measure, noting that it provides real incentives for federal and postal employees under FERS to retain their sick leave at the end of their career,

rather than use it. "This uneven approach [between FERS and CSRS sick leave policies] fails to sufficiently discourage the use of sick leave by FERS employees during the period leading up to retirement," Keating told Moran. "Your legislation will balance the scale and provide the tools for improved management of the federal and postal workforce, yielding greater productivity and cost-savings."

Postal Service and civil service employees under FERS will be attracted to the Moran measure because of the fairness it provides in how sick leave is treated and for the boost it gives to their pensions when they save their sick leave.

Congress will be attracted to the Moran measure for a different reason, namely, the gains to the government when employees retain their sick leave, rather than use (or abuse) it. Greater productivity should come about, through employees being present to perform their jobs, rather than leaving the work to others. This should help to save dollars, improve morale and create a better workplace.


There is no doubt that the difference in how sick leave is treated under CSRS and FERS creates distinguishable trends in its use among workers nearing retirement.

FERS employees who receive no value for their unused sick leave will use that leave rather than simply forfeit it back to the government at retirement. The Congress-

sional Research Service last August found that FERS employees who were eligible to retire or approaching eligibility generally used more sick leave than their CSRS counterparts. Independent reports by the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration and the Bureau of Prisons also confirmed that FERS employees were more likely to use sick leave than CSRS employees at the time of retirement.

The savings that can result through abandonment of the use-it-or-lose it approach toward FERS sick leave are considerable. The Office of Personnel Management estimated in a May 2006 report that the lost productivity caused by the increased use of sick leave by FERS employees who were eligible or nearly eligible to retire cost the federal government \$68 million on an annual basis, based upon available data between April 2005 and March 2006.

Last year, the House passed HR 1108, a bill regulating the use of tobacco, which included a provision to provide 75% credit for accrued sick leave for three years following enactment. Although there was broad support for the bill in the House, the measure did not move in the Senate because of the controversial tobacco provisions. This year's FERS sick leave measure is a stand-alone bill, without the tobacco provisions. ☐



2009 NAPS BRANCH 66 \$500.00 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS:

Sydney Clark - daughter of Barbara Clark

Jessica McGlasson - daughter of Dee Ann DeSimini



The Time is Now

By Reece Steelman
Vice President, City Operations 1

It seems like every time you pick up the newspaper or turn on the news, yet another company is announcing layoffs or store closures. The number of unemployed workers, home foreclosure rates, and personal bankruptcies continue to rise and it appears that there is no end in sight. However, as postal management employees, we have been somewhat immune to the recession.

Granted, our TSP funds have sunk so low a team of NAVY SEALS would be hard pressed to find them, but we are still employed. We still have health insurance, life insurance, sick leave, a pension plan and holiday leave. And, to top it all off, we just received a pay increase. How many of our friends and neighbors can say the same?

Our current pay package is a direct result of the joint consultative process between NAPS, NAPUS, The League, and the Postal Service. When we were recently asked to forgo our pay increases,

NAPS, NAPUS, and The League joined together once again and stood up to those in Washington D.C. by declining the offer.

Right now, the Postal Service is operating at its most efficient rate in its storied history. Customer satisfaction, on-time delivery, and EXFC scores are at all time highs due in part to the leadership that we provide to the organization. And the public continues to rate us as one of the most trusted government agencies. However, we all know that tough times are ahead and I'm sure that the organization will look at the different management groups and unions to offer concessions in order to remain a staple for the American public. Should all those concessions be made by management? Or, should we all work together to make our processes more efficient? Now is NOT the time to sit on the fence and allow others to decide your future. Now IS the time to get active in your local NAPS Branch and let your voice be heard. ☎

Tidbits

2169 EAS Employees Accepted the VERA

- 374 Supervisors C.S.
- 96 Supervisors D.O.
- 581 Other Field EAS
- 928 Postmasters
- 190 HQ/HQ Related Employees

Your newsletter will soon arrive in a new personalized Forever stamp envelope that is being introduced in conjunction with the May rate increase.

The Postal Service purchases the most rubber bands and pressure sensitive adhesive in the world.

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Your Branch 66 Officers

| | | |
|----------------------------|---|--|
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The NAPS Newsletter

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Any member may submit an article for publication but submissions should be limited to 300 words or less. The decision to edit or publish submitted articles remains with the Editor, Branch 66.

If your address changes, please notify the Newsletter Editor. Address changes and articles may be submitted via regular mail or email to: napsnews@comcast.net